

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6906

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

UNCLAS DAKAR 2614

AFDROUGHT

EO 11652N/A

ROME FOR FODAG

SUBJ: MAURITANIA GRAIN PIPELINE

REF: STATE 097420

1. IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT SLOW MOVEMENT BY GOS OF OTHER DONOR/COMMERCIALY PURCHASED GRAINS NOW ARRIVING IN THE PORT OF DAKAR COULD CAUSE A BOTTLENECK WHICH WOULD PREVENT SUBSEQUENT ARRIVALS AT PORT FROM DISCHARGING CARGO. THIS WOULD EXACERBATE THE SITUATION PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ON (ZONE FRANCHE MALIENNE). THEREFORE, THE SUGGESTION PARA A ABOVE REFERENCED MESSAGE A WELCOME ONE. EXACTLY HOW MUCH ASSISTANCE WE ARE PREPARED TO OFFER THE GOS, FOR WHAT MAGNITUDE OF COMMODITY AND FOR WHAT LENGTH OF TIME (WHERE MOVEMENT AND STORAGE ARE CONCERNED) STILL REQUIRE FURTHER CLARIFICATION, HOWEVER.

2. (B) POSSIBILITIES OF AUGMENTED BARGE FLOW ST LOUIS-ROSS SHOULD DEFINITELY BE LOOKED INTO. PREVIOUSLY, SOCOPAO HAD UNCLASSIFIED

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ESTIMATED THAT MAXIMUM WHICH COULD BE ACHIEVED WAS 600 MT

WEEK. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT AS LONG AS THE LAGER, THOUGH CRIPPLED, FERRY CONTINUES TO OPERATE, EVACUATION RATE VIA BOTH MEANS SHOULD STILL REACH 5000 MT MONTH (DAKAR-ROSSO).

3. POSSIBILITIES STORAGE MAURITANIAN STOCKS AT ST LOUIS/ OTHER POINTS BEING ASSESSED. AGAIN, PRECISE AMOUNT OF SUPPORT WE ARE PREPARED TO GIVE WILL HAVE TO BE SPELLED OUT.

4. 24 HOUR OPERATION OF SINGLE OPERATING FERRY, WHICH FUNCTIONS PRESENTLY ON ONLY ONE OF ITS TWO ENGINES, NOT FEASIBLE. (ON PREVIOUS TDY, FFPO STRONGLY RECOMMENDED REPAIR/REHABILITATION OF BOTH FERRIES VIA THE USE OF STEPS FUNDS THEN AVAILABLE, BUT GIRM WAS APPARENTLY UNRECEPTIVE.) UNCERTAIN WHETHER SMALLER FERRY, NOW AT BOTTOM OF RIVER, CAN BE RECLAIMED FOR FURTHER USE.

5. CEREALS CROSSING VIA PIROGUE, FERRY SITE TO ROSSO: HARDLY WORTH THE EFFORT, CONSIDERING THE AMOUNT WHICH COULD BE CARRIED, AND THE ADDITIONAL WEAR AND TEAR CAUSED BY EXCESSIVE HANDLING. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT DAMAGE LEVEL MUCH HIGHER ST LOUIS-ROSSO THAN ROAD ROUTE DAKAR-ROSSO, PURELY BECAUSE OF NUMBER OF TIMES BAGS HAVE TO BE LOADED/UNLOADED.

6. IN OPINION FFPO, PRESENTLY ASSESSED CAPABILITY OF MOVEMENT, IE 5,000 MT/MO ADEQUATE IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT A SUBSTANTIAL TONNAGE TITLE II COMMODITIES, ESTIMATED AT 8,000 MT, STILL TO BE DISPATCHED TO INTERIOR FROM ROSSO. A REPORT THAT A MUCH LARGER AMOUNT OF CORN ALSO AWAITS DISPATCH AT ROSSO IS BEING CHECKED OUT.

7. USE OF A BARGE TO AUGMENT PRESENT FERRY AT ROSSO WOULD PROBABLY BE MORE TROUBLE THAN IT IS WORTH, GIVEN NUMBER OF HANDLING OPERATIONS WITH RESULTANT DAMAGE TO BAGS GRAIN. SUCH AN OPERATION WOULD BE LIKELY TO CAUSE MORE OF A BOTTLE-NECK THAN IT RELIEVES.

8. TRANS-SHIPMENT BY SEA FROM DAKAR TO NOUAKCHOTT OF PORTION OF ALLOCATION CAN BE CONSIDERED. PREVIOUS EXPERIMENT OF THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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SORT WAS HARDLY CONFIDENCE-INSPIRING, AND INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO FIND SHIPS WILLING TO TAKE THE RISK OF REMAINING AT ANCHOR AT NOUAKCHOTT ROADS FOR A WEEK OR LONGER BEFORE BEING ABLE TO DISCHARGE, AT LEAST WHERE SMALL COASTAL STEAMERS ARE CONCERNED. A LARGER VESSEL MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE (VIA A CONTRACT WITH SCTT, ONE OF THE DAKAR FORWARDERS), BUT DEMURRAGE WOULD HAVE TO BE A FEATURE OF THE AGREEMENT, AND SUCH COSTS COULD AMOUNT, IF THE WAITING

PERIOD IS LONG, TO A VERY SUBSTANTIAL SUM. THE TRANSFER
OF THE GRAIN TO LIGHTERS, AND FROM LIGHTERS TO THE PIER,
ARE OPERATIONS IN WHICH A 20 PERCENT LOSS OF COMMODITY CAN
BE ANTICIPATED.

9. DONOR COORDINATION/MANAGEMENT MUST BEGIN AT ROME, AND
NOT DAKAR. AN OUNCE OF COORDINATION AT THAT LEVEL IS
WORTH SEVERAL KILOS OF CURE AT THIS ONE.
AGGREY

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